AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION:

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page1, line 7, as follows:

~~This application claims the benefit~~ This application is a divisional of Application No. 09/455,543, filed December 7, 1999, which claims the benefit of U.S. Provisional Patent Application No. 60/111,271, filed December 7, 1998, the entire disclosures of which ~~is~~are incorporated herein by reference.

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 1, line 17 as follows:

Breast cancer is a proliferative disease of mammary epithelial cells and estrogen has been shown to stimulate cell proliferation of these cells both in culture and in mice (Soto and Sonnenschein, 1985; Osborne, ~~1988~~1981). Xenoestrogens have been proposed to stimulate cell proliferation through binding and activating estrogen receptors (ERs) (Miller et al., 1993; Hoffman, 1992). The incidence of breast cancer has been steadily rising during the past two or three decades, a trend characterized by increasing rates among estrogen-responsive tumors, by continuing increases among older women, and by growing numbers in both developed and developing countries (Harris et al., 1992). Between 1973-1980, the incidence of breast cancer in the United States increased a modest 8% among women under 50 years of age, while it rose 32.1% among women in the age group of 50 years or older (~~Ries~~Reese et al., 1991). This upward shift is consistent with the historical pattern of accumulation of organochlorine insecticide residues (xenoestrogens) in the environment (Mussalo-Rauhamaa et al., 1990; Wolff et al., 1993; Davis et al., 1993). Breast cancer is also the second leading cause of cancer deaths in women and it is estimated that in 1998, there will be an additional 43,900 deaths due to breast cancer. Environmental estrogens or endocrine disruptors have been suggested to play a role in the etiology or promotion of breast cancer (Davis et al., 1993; Dewailly et al., ~~1995~~1994).

Experimental evidence reveals that xenoestrogens affect estrogen production and metabolism and are among the risk factors that cause breast cancer (Nelson, ~~1974~~1978; Berthois et al., 1986; Henderson et al., 1993; Jobling et al., ~~1996~~1995; Dees et al., 1997). Most of the known risk factors for breast cancer, which at least account for 30% of cases (Henderson et al., 1993) are linked with total life-time exposure to reproductive chemicals such as estrogen and xenoestrogens.